Special agriculture zone

†*346. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government are planning to establish Special Agriculture Zone on the lines of Special Economic Zone in the country;

(b) if so, the number of Special Agriculture Zones Government propose to establish in each State of the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (d) No, Sir. There is no proposal under consideration for setting up of Special Agriculture Zone on the lines of Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in the country.

Increasing the production of ethanol

†*347. SHRI SANJAY RAUT:
SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to declare some concessions for increasing the production of ethanol keeping in view of its utility;

(b) whether those sugar mills which have their own distilleries but not having the facility of producing ethanol would be provided with concessional loans from the Sugar Development Fund and be allowed to set up plants; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The Government has decided to encourage production and use of ethanol for blending with petrol as a fuel. Some of the difficulties faced by the industry in production and unrestricted movement of ethanol have been brought to the notice of the Government. The Government has not taken any final view in the matter.

(b) and (c) The Sugar Development Fund Act and Rules were modified in June, 2002 and January, 2003 respectively under which loans from Sugar Development Fund (SDF) are given to sugar mills for production of ethanol at a concessional rate of interest of 2% below the Bank Rate which effectively works out to 4% per annum at present. Loans are already being provided from SDF to sugar mills which have their own distilleries for production of anhydrous alcohol or ethanol from alcohol as follows :

(i) In case any sugar factory, implementing a project for production of anhydrous alcohol or ethanol from alcohol, has been approved for

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.